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AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

The Examiner is respectfully requested to replace paragraphs in the specification as follows. It is noted that paragraph [0055] in the original application was unduly long and, accordingly, it has been broken into three paragraphs, as well as being amended. This resulted in paragraphs [0055], [0055A] and [0055B] below.

[0017] In another embodiment, the bumper system comprises a bumper beam and an energy-absorbing bracket connected to the bumper beam and adapted for connection to the motor vehicle. The bracket comprises a hollow energy-absorbing body having a generally tubular form with a first end and a second end. The bracket hollow energy-absorbing body has a first cross sectional shape at the first end which transitions to a second cross sectional shape at the second end.

[0027] In an alternative embodiment of the method of the present invention, the method includes providing an energy-absorbing bracket comprising a hollow energy-absorbing body having a generally tubular form with a first end and a second end, the bracket hollow energy-absorbing body having a first cross sectional shape at the first end and transitioning to a second cross sectional shape at the second end, the bracket body further comprising opposing flanges at least at the first end of the bracket body, the opposing flanges defining a mouth opening, and receiving and securing a bumper beam in the mouth opening at the first end of the bracket body. The method may further comprise attaching the second end of the bracket body to the motor vehicle.

[0055] The bumper system 10 is assembled and connected to a motor vehicle body (not shown) as generally outlined hereinafter. Initially, the energy-absorbing brackets 14 are first attached to the bumper beam 12 and, in particular, to the bumper beam body 22 with the Σ-shaped cross section 20 received in the first mouth openings 16 62 defined at the first ends 16 of the bracket bodies 15. The open end or face 30 of the Σ-shaped cross section 20 is received in the mouth

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openings 62. The flanges 76, 78 thereby cooperate with the top and bottom walls or sides 26, 28 of the bumper beam body 22. The mechanical fasteners 81 may then be inserted into the openings 80 in the flanges 76, 78 and, preferably, corresponding openings (not shown) in the top and bottom walls or sides 26, 28 of the bumper beam body 22 to secure the bumper beam 12 to the end brackets 14. The pole impact protector 40 is preferably pre-attached to the bumper beam body 22 by the methods discussed previously.

[0055A] The bumper system 10 is now generally configured for connection to the frame rails 60 extending from a motor vehicle body (not shown). In particular, the flanges 82, 84 cooperate with the top and bottom walls or surfaces of the frame rails 60, one of which is illustrated schematically in Fig. 2. In particular, the mechanical fasteners 87 are inserted into the openings 86 in the flanges 82, 84 and preferably corresponding openings (not shown) in the top and bottom walls or surfaces of the frame rails 60 to join the bumper system 10 to the motor vehicle body. In summary, the end brackets 14 are preferably first attached to the bumper beam 12 and the pole impact protector 40 is next attached to the bumper beam 12 ~~for to~~ form the bumper system 10. Once the bumper system 10 is formed in this "modular" fashion, the bumper system 10 may be mounted to a motor vehicle body (not shown). The bumper system 10 may be located at either the front or rear ends of the motor vehicle body.

[0055B] Referring to Figs. 9-12, an alternative embodiment of the end brackets 14' of the present invention is shown. In the variation of the end brackets 14' shown in Figs. 9-12, the bracket body 15' is hollow, tubular and elongated between the first and second ends 16', 18'. Additionally Preferably, the bracket body 15' no longer forms a "saddle" shape between the first and second ends 16', 18'. In contrast, the bracket body 15' now generally changes cross sectional shape from the first to the second ends 16', 18', as discussed further herein, which provides the "energy-absorbing" function for the end brackets 14'. Moreover

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Preferably, the second end 18' of the bracket body 15' now has a substantially flat or blunted shape for attaching the end bracket 14' directly to the end of a frame rail (not shown, see Fig. 2). Accordingly, the bracket body 15', preferably does not include the flanges 82, 84 extending from the second end 18 of the bracket body 15 discussed previously. The second end 18' of the bracket body 15' preferably now defines a plurality of openings or holes 88, which are used to secure the end brackets 14' to the frame rails of a motor vehicle body with conventional mechanical fasteners. It will be apparent that the second end 18' may connected directly to the frame rail of a motor vehicle body by other means such as by welding.